The Passing Lane

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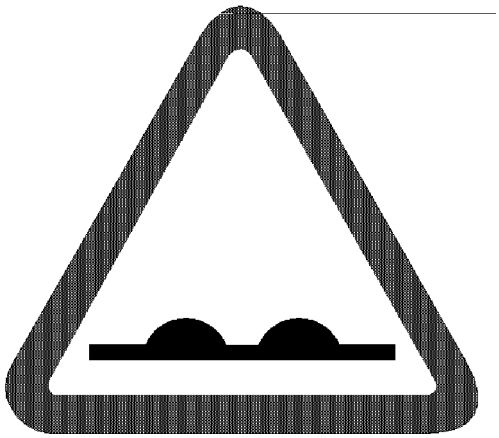

World Wide Web Page Launched

Point your browser to:

http://www.crab.wa.gov/

...and take an early peek at CRAB's corner of the current star of the internet, the World Wide Web. This is a temporary 'Page' that is just ripple compared to the splash we plan to make.

How would you like to sign up for classes on-line? Have accident data mailed to you the second it is available? Download a program update without having to dial-up a BBS? Setup your own 'home page' for free on the CRAB server? See a picture of what is in the CRAB refrigerator RIGHT NOW? Subscribe to electronic versions of CRAB publications?

All of these are possible and other services are only limited by our imaginations. Every day it gets easier and cheaper to connect to the internet. So give us a call if you would like help getting WIRED or want to tell us what you want to see in our on-line presence.

Inside this issue:

- Publish it on the net
- October Conference Report
- Avoid this Crash Cours
- The Last Great CRIS

The Passing Lane is a publication of the Washington State County Road Administration Board. Unauthorized distribution is strictly forbidden unless accompanied by boisterous praise for the below mentioned staff. Please call **(360)753-5989** if you would like more information regarding this newsletter or would like a free lifetime subscription. Our electronic bulletin board may be reached at **(360)664-0946, N81.**

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CRAB CEAL CRIS?

Chipseal the Information Superhighway

If you would like to setup a homepage for your organization, we will provide space on our internet server for your data. To encourage this kind of activity, we will provide extra-special support to early birds that want to start right-away. Support includes ideas about information that might go on a homepage, how to create HTML documents, and how to get others in your organization interested in participating in your homepage development. This CRAB service is ready for county use, so call now.

Washington Road Design Conference

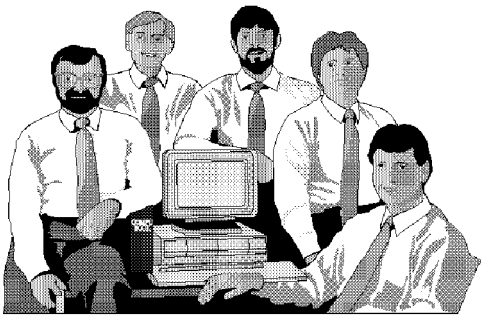
The annual CEAL conference we've been hosting for the past 6 years found itself expanding this year to encompass a wider range of short design topics on the first day, and internet connectivity, new operating systems, and Eagle Point software. CLM Systems was there, too, although Dan Dickson, whose brainchild this conference was, was missed, having left the employ of CLM only weeks before. However, this was the first opportunity many county staffers got to hear from Allan Pusch, one of CLM's developers and long term employees, and from Elmer Volzer, a newer recruit from the Bureau of Indian Affairs side of the geoid who is focussing on customer support for CLM.

The first day of this two day conference focussed on short topics related to road design. Thoughtful presentations about specification writing and pedestrian design issues in the morning, we're followed by spirited discussions about pavement design and environmental permitting in the afternoon. This was the first opportunity for some to hear about the new design software which will be available from CRAB later this year, Eagle Point Advantage Series, and perhaps our first exposure to decorative concrete made to look like stones, this latter topic courtesy of the Heritage Corridors program at WSDOT.

The second day was reserved for systems (computer) topics, and as usual, there was no lack of interest in these subjects. This day was scheduled as a group forum, joining WSDOT and county engineering staff as in past years. We heard about Windows 95 and Windows NT, what's the difference and what's the story. We heard about the pitfalls involved in trying to use state plane coordinates at the project level, and finally about the internet, how to make your connection and why. Allan Pusch from CLM expressed quite eloquently CLM's commitment to the continued development of CEAL and CEAL's interface to new operating systems from Microsoft and CAD platforms. Its clear from their presentation in the morning and the afternoon that CLM sees CEAL taking on a whole new face in a Windows NT world. Many CEAL users present at the meeting were excited by what will be coming from CLM in 1996 and beyond.

Our workshops have always been our strongest draw here, and with the kind of commitment we saw from this year's speakers, is it any wonder why? We took a better look at CEAL in cross-section, participated in a dialog with CLM, discovered a new version of CEGRAPH, took a fresh look at CEAL Job files, watched how the internet connection happens, saw CRAB roll out Roadshow for its first public flic, and took a closer look at Eagle Point, CRAB's newest software offering.

Our feedback about the conference suggested that we need to continue to search for ways to demonstrate new technology while using this opportunity to discuss how our existing installations are performing. Thanks to everyone who took the time to attend this year, and a special thanks to all the speakers who made the event even possible.



Information Technology Training

CRAB will again be holding training sessions in its primary software support functions, County Road Information System (CRIS) and Civil Engineering Automation Library (CEAL). We are also proud to announce our newest course offering - Eagle Point Fundamentals this December!! Here's the scoop:

November:

- 7 CRIS Bridge Management System
- 13 Introduction to CRIS
- 14-15 CRIS Reporting Workshop
- 16-17 Intro to the County Pavement Management Planning System
- 28 CRIS Maintenance Management System

December:

- 4 Introduction to CRIS
- 5-6 CRIS Reporting Workshop
- 7-8 Intro to the County Pavement Management Planning System
- 12 CRIS Bridge Management System
- 18-21 Eagle Point Fundamentals

January:

- 4 CRIS Bridge Management System
- 8-9 Intro to the County Pavement Management Planning System
- 16-17 Introduction to CEAL
- 18-19 CEAL Road Design
- 22 CRIS Maintenance Management System
- 24 Introduction to CRIS
- 25-26 CRIS Reporting Workshop
- 29-2/1 Eagle Point Fundamentals

February:

- 13-16 Eagle Point Fundamentals
- 2/14 CRIS Maintenance Management System
- 26-3/1 Colfax Design Workshop (Eagle Point Fundamentals)

Call today to reserve your spot in our *FREE* courses. Refreshers are always welcome too!

Design System Update

CRAB will introduce a new software choice for engineers, surveyors, and technicians later this fall called Eagle Point Advantage Series. You or someone else at the county should have received an order form for this software in the mail or by FAX by now. Please fill it out and return it by October 30 to help us get started on what our evaluation team has already resolved is a remarkable deal. If you are unsure about whether you want to participate in the Eagle Point purchase at this time and want more information, then indicate this on the order form. There will be opportunities to get on board later. Unfortunately, because of prior commitments, CRAB will be unable to offer training in any design systems until December (see training schedule). Be sure to look for monthly training opportunities in the Passing Lane for both Eagle Point and CEAL later this winter. If you have any questions about the advantages of CRAB's design support for Eagle Point, or its ongoing support for CEAL, phone John Donahue at (360) 664-CEAL.

Fun With Accidents

Have you ever wanted to see specific accident data on a Roadlog segment or near an intersection? Well CRIS makes this now possible. From Severity and Total Injuries to Vehicle and Pedestrian/Cyclist specifics, all information previously only available via the accident file is new available to you in all the CRIS inventories, the CPMPS, and a few miscellaneous files like Reference Points and Roads.

For example, say you want to know which roadlog segments have the greatest number of accidents. At a TCL line you could type:

```
LIST ROADLOG BY-DSND ACC.CRASH
WITH ACC.CRASH > 0 ROAD.NUMBER
FROM.MILEPOST TO.MILEPOST
ACC.CRASH
```

Or maybe you want to know which intersections have had fatalities. The following TCL statement will accomplish that:

```
LIST REF.POINTS WITH ACC.FATALI  -
TIES > 0 ROAD.NUMBER MILEPOST
ROAD.NAME ACC.FATALITIES
```

You can also create some unusual reports such as which signs have had accidents close to them on Wednesdays:

```
LIST SIGNS WITH ACC.DAY.LOOKUP =
'WEDNESDAY'
```

Or which street lights have had accidents near them while its raining:

```
LIST LIGHTS WITH
ACC.WEATHER.LOOKUP = 'RAIN'
```

Before you can use these new CRIS features to access the accident information CRIS needs to be updated. You can download UPDTACC.ZIP from the CRAB BBS at (360) 664-0946 or call the CRIS Help line at (360) 664-2747 and ask us to mail you a disk. Or just wait a few weeks. The features described above have been added to CRIS for AREV V3.12 which is coming soon to a computer near you.

Any Port in an O/S Storm - CEAL and Windows NT

The raves have been pointing out for months that Windows NT finally delivers that superior networking and blistering performance that your high end PC has been screaming for. CEAL 7.0x, the version many of you have upgraded to this year, will indeed work inside Windows NT, but this requires a little bit of finesse regarding parallel port configuration. Lets break this down into a step by step process. And if this wretchedly sketchy description leaves you wondering. . . then you counties can call John Donahue at (360) 664-CEAL for your free, easily digested FAX on this topic (thanks to WSDOT). Here's the scoop:

1. Load CEAL onto your computer

2. Create an ICON in an existing program group using File/New/Program Item. Use the CEAL.PIF and EAL.ICO file

3. Edit CEAL.PIF using the PIF editor and change the following on the first screen:

- Program Filename: c:\winnt35\system32\command.com
- Optional Parameters: /e:1024/c c:\ceal\ceal.bat
- Video Memory: High Graphics
- Execution: Background

4. Now put the the self-extracting zip rainbow.exe into its own directory on your PC and execute it. It contains the hardware port driver for your hardware lock.

Using the Drivers ICON in Control Panel, click on ADD and Browse to select the directory where you unzipped rainbow.exe. NT will put the files in the right places and run a setup routine.

5. The rainbow setup routine assigns the port address and bus type for where your hardware lock resides. This is usually LPT1 and hexadecimal address 0378H. Each machine will probably be different. Use the abundant help to make sure you're setting everything up right.

The rainbow driver is available from the CEAL file area at CRAB's friendly BBS [(360) 664-0946 (8,N,1)]. If you are a modemless county with an NT need, phone John Donahue at (360) 664-CEAL for you free diskette.

The Last Great CRIS

As you may be aware CRAB staff has been busy this summer and fall converting CRIS to run on AREV 3.12. AREV 3.12 will be the last MS-DOS upgrade and is a necessary step to launch CRIS towards the ''Windows'' environment. This project is now in the final phase with only the installation program to be completed.

What does this mean for you? Well, if you do NOT have custom changes on your CRIS, not too much. But, if you have modified CRIS to suit a particular need, there is some preparation steps which will make the conversion much smoother. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the preparations or the upgrade, call the CRIS hotline at (360) 664-2747 and ask for Gene or Dr. John.

Many important changes have been incorporated in CRIS for AREV 3.12. Most of these changes should be transparent or "behind the scenes" and go unnoticed by your users. The largest change comes from replacing the *dots* with *underscores* in the file and dictionary names. You can breath a sight of relief though, because your custom reports will be backward compatible and continue to work with the *dots* in them. Many minor CRIS ''features'' have been fixed. The CRIS security section has been updated to include the CPMPS and Maintenance Management modules along with many new example users. Increased access to accident data from other CRIS files has been added (see *Fun With Accidents*). The CRIS menus have been modified to allow easier access to commonly used items such as Batch Update and Export. CRIS has become more portable with increased ability to ''check out'' and ''restore'' varying inventories for field work and backup purposes. CRIS has ''grown up'' and is now less reliant on the main AREV directory which will make life substantially easier when moving CRIS around the office from one computer to another or to portable laptops. Gene claims that he has seen a solitiare game hiding out somewhere in CRIS. Dr John's favorite new feature is the ability to start back at the place where you left off with CRIS automatically saving the TCL stack between sessions. New power and abilities have come to CRIS with new TCL commands. Some TCL commands have been renamed, bet we have ''preserved'' most of the old commands to allow CRIS to be more flexible and compatible. The overall speed and efficiency for CRIS has increased in this version. The mouse support has been substantially expanded and improved including the addition of selection boxes for Popups and Messages. But probably the best news of all is that CRAB has purchased an upgrade to AREV 3.12 for each county, helping you avoid that typically difficult task.

Although we are expecting a smooth conversion, unforeseen problems can appear. Therefore we in the CRAB Information Services section would like to visit each county to help in the conversion. Look for us in the late fall and early winter.

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